(e) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) The quantity of paddy procured by FCI in the current Kharif marketing year i.e. 1996-97 (upto 11.12.1996) is as under :

(in tonnes)

State/U.T	Common	Fine	Superfine	Total
Punjab	133,313	15,69,165	-	17,02,478
Haryana	595	1,144	162,417	1,64,156
UT of Chandigarh		Not Available		3,372
Total	133,908	15,70,309	162/417	18,70,006

The minimum support prices for various groups of paddy for 1996-97 marketing season are as under :

Common	Rs. 380/- per quintal
Fine	Rs. 395/- per quintal
Superfine	Rs. 415/- per quintal

These prices are uniform throughout the country.

(b) and (c). Complaints were received that PR-106 paddy is not being purchased in Punjab at M.S.P. fixed for Superfine paddy.

FCI purchase paddy on the basis of their classification as per Length/Breadth ratio as Common, Fine and Superfine. Although PR—106 variety of paddy is classified as Superfine, it may be downgraded to next lower group i.e. Fine, in case the admixture of lower groups of paddy is higher than the limit prescribed in the specifications. Instructions have been issued to FCI to ensure that the price is paid to the farmers as per the prescribed specifications.

(d) No, Sir. No paddy, which has been classified as superfine in neighbouring states, has been classified as Fine or Common in Punjab.

(e) Does not arise.

New Variety of Rice

*368. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether scientists of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the International Rice Research Institute have put their brain together to produce 'Super Rice Plant' that may radically increase its yield;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Indian Council of Agricultural Research has already produced a new hybrid variety of rice that would increase its yield by one tonne per hectare?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) and (b). Scientists at International Rice Research Institute, Manila, Philippines are working on the concept of super rice, which it is believed would raise the yield level of rice by 20-25%. ICAR scientists are also working independently to develop rice variety with the same objective. Development of such a variety will involve remodelling of the rice plant structurally to bear heavy panicles with high grain number and high grain weight.

(c) Yes Sir. Under the ICAR system six rice hybrids namely, APHR-1, APHR-2, MGR-1, KRH-1, KRH-2, DRRH-1 AND CNRH-1 have been released for cultivation in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. These hybrids yield 1.0-1.5 tonnes more per hectare than the best high yielding varieties under the irrigated conditions.

[Translation]

Protection of Taj from Pollution

*369. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the resources mobilised by the Government to save Tajmahal from the environmental pollution;

(b) whether the State Government has demanded equal participation of the Central Government in mobilising the resources for the development of Taj Protected Area;

(c) if so, the details of the projects for which the demand has been made; and

(d) the steps taken by the Central Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAYAN PRASAD NISHAD) : (a) to (c). The Planning Commission is considering to allot Rs. 300 crores as Central share during the Ninth Plan on a 50:50 percent matching basis with the State Government of Uttar Pradesh to cover the estimated cost of Rs. 600 crores to implement varies schemes relating to the protection of Taj Mahal. The Planning Commission has also made an additional provision of Rs. 90 crores to the Govetnment of Uttar Pradesh for improvement of power sector-transmission and distribution for the protection of environment in the Taj Trapezium.

(d) The Planning Commission has decided that as and when the State Government would raise a demand in respect of specific project relating to Taj Mahal, the necessary amount in advance out of the approved outlay would be released.

[English]

Drug Menace

370. PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'NIDAR' : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been